

# Citizen AIRMAN

Vol. 62 No. 5  
October 2010  
[www.afrc.af.mil](http://www.afrc.af.mil)  
Official Magazine of the  
Air Force Reserve



# Suicide

Help is just a wingman away

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## Combat Camera's Hero

Photographer  
awaiting  
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## PORT DAWGS

They move  
the world  
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## From the Top

By Lt. Gen. Charles E. Stenner Jr.  
Commander, Air Force Reserve Command



## Chief's View

By Chief Master Sgt. Dwight Badgett  
Command Chief Master Sergeant,  
Air Force Reserve Command

### Suicide prevention ... be a lifesaver!

**W**hen we deploy to and from hostile fire zones and are under the constant threat of combat conditions, as Airmen, we are well-trained and prepared for the worst to react in emergency situations. But, how many of us are really prepared to help a fellow Citizen Airman who may be having suicidal thoughts?

While we have implemented some solid suicide awareness programs, there is still much work to be done. We can never get complacent or have a cavalier attitude toward suicide prevention. We can't afford to simply "check the box" about training or dismiss the take-aways the minute we walk out of the briefing room or log off our computer-based training session.

As recently as September, we had another suicide in our Air Force Reserve family. It's heart-breaking to me that one of our Airmen felt there was nowhere else to turn and that suicide was the only way out.

I can't impress upon you enough how important it is in our daily lives to take the time to ask the simple question, "Do you need help?" We may never fully know in the course of a day how many lives we touch. If you saw someone drowning in a swimming pool, wouldn't you throw a life ring to help or even jump in yourself and pull the person to safety? Suicide prevention is no different.

Hopefully you received the recent e-mail note I sent out about all the resources that are available to everyone in our Reserve family. In addition, please take the time to read the article on Page 16 for more information about the suicide awareness and prevention programs that could help save lives today.

Each and every Citizen Airman is as important as the person standing next to them shoulder to shoulder. Never forget that. ★

### Now more than ever, we need to build resiliency

**O**ver the past few months, there has been a lot of discussion in the Air Force about resiliency as it relates to deployments and combat. But, we need to make it perfectly clear that Airmen resiliency is about much more than deployments. It's about preparing ourselves to cope with the stresses, including deployments, of being an Airman, managing our own triad of family, employer and the Air Force, and, in some cases, just living.

We have to develop the physical, mental, social and spiritual skills to cope with and adapt to many stressors in our lives. Uncontrolled stress can cause a variety of problems in our lives ranging from illness to the ultimate tragedy, suicide.

We all face financial, relationship and, sometimes, legal challenges at some point in our lives. That's not unusual, but how we deal with these situations is critical to our health and well-being. Low resiliency can lead to anxiety, exhaustion, sudden rage, inability to concentrate, procrastination and poor decision-making. All of these conditions can cause us to forget about safety and can lead to accidents that are preventable.

You can find help in dealing with stress by contacting a mental health professional, chaplain or physical fitness expert at the fitness center. Keeping yourself fit and healthy and asking for the necessary help is a great way to stay resilient and deal with the pressures we face as Airmen every day.

Don't let a problem worsen and hope it will just go away. Seeking help is a sign of strength, not weakness, because you recognize that it is important to address the issues caused by stress and work to address them. Physical activity not only makes your body healthier, it also helps to "work off" some of the daily stress we face as parents, children, employees and productive members of society. You will be a more productive member of our great Air Force as you work to improve your mental and emotional agility.

As a wingman, you also have a responsibility to other Airmen to help them build resiliency. We owe it to each other to do everything possible to make sure no Airman feels there is no other alternative but to hurt himself or take his own life. Don't be afraid to ask the tough question. You may be saving a life. ★



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On the front cover: (Top) Although suicide rates are on the increase across the military as a whole, Air Force Reserve rates have held relatively steady over the past seven years. Reserve officials maintain the best weapon in the war against suicide remains a good wingman. See story, Page 16. (Bottom left) Combat camera photographer Staff Sgt. Jorge Rodriguez, shown here as a senior airman, is battling for his life as he waits for a new heart. See story, Page 22. (Bottom right) For more than 60 years, aerial porters have been moving cargo and passengers in support of military, national and international airlift missions. See story, Page 26.

**Gen. Norton A. Schwartz** *Chief of Staff, United States Air Force*

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*Citizen Airman* magazine (ISSN No. 0887-9680) is published bi-monthly by Headquarters Air Force Reserve Command Office of Public Affairs for the commander of Air Force Reserve Command. Periodical postage paid at Warner Robins, Ga., and additional mailing offices. Copies are mailed, free of charge, to the homes of all Reservists. Content is normally news articles and features developed for release to commercial media as part of the Air Force Reserve's continuing public affairs program. Opinions of contributors are not necessarily those of the Air Force Reserve. All photos are U.S. Air Force photos unless otherwise indicated. Readers-per-copy ratio: 4:1.

Send inquiries and submissions to HQ AFRC/PAP, 255 Richard Ray Blvd. Suite 137, Robins AFB, GA 31098-1661. Or, fax them to DSN 497-0878 or commercial 478-327-0878. Our e-mail address is afrc.pap@us.af.mil.

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POSTMASTER: Please send all Forms 3579 to *Citizen Airman*, HQ AFRC/PAP, 255 Richard Ray Blvd. Suite 137, Robins AFB, GA 31098-1661.

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Airman First Class Tony Dechristopher (left) and Tech. Sgt. Jimmy Laroche perform maintenance on a C-5 at the 439th Airlift Wing, Westover Air Reserve Base, Mass. Plans are in the works for Westover's isochronal dock to become the sole ISO dock in Air Force Reserve Command in less than two years. For the story, see page 24.



Tech. Sgt. John Orzechowski, deployed from the Reserve's 477th Civil Engineer Squadron, Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska, repairs wiring inside a security forces command post on Kirkuk Regional Air Base, Iraq. (Senior Airman Eunique Stevens)



Pedro Bonilla (left) and Christian Smith, students from Cardozo Senior High School in Washington, D.C., check out the boom operator's view from the rear of a KC-135 Stratotanker at Joint Base Andrews, Md. Twenty students from the high school toured the base and spoke with Airmen from the 459th Air Refueling Wing and the 316th Wing about career opportunities in the Air Force Reserve and regular Air Force. (Staff Sgt. Steve Lewis)



The Olaes family makes the Air Force, and re-enlistment, a family affair. From the left: Staff Sgts. Mary Kathleen Olaes and Josephine (Olaes) Tunnell re-enlist in the Reserve's 349th Air Mobility Wing, Travis Air Force Base, Calif., for another six years. Holding the flag in blue is their dad, Chief Master Sgt. Rogelio Olaes of the regular Air Force's 615th Contingency Response Wing. Administering the oath of enlistment is Capt. George Carter, known as "Uncle George" to the sisters. The captain is assigned to the 15th Air Mobility Operations Squadron. (Senior Master Sgt. Ellen L. Hatfield)



Senior Airman Jonathan Ordonez, a KC-135 crew chief with the 507th Air Refueling Wing, Tinker Air Force Base, Okla., prepares to cover an engine after a refueling mission in support of Rim of the Pacific Exercise 2010 at Hickam AFB, Hawaii. (Master Sgt. Jeremy Lock)

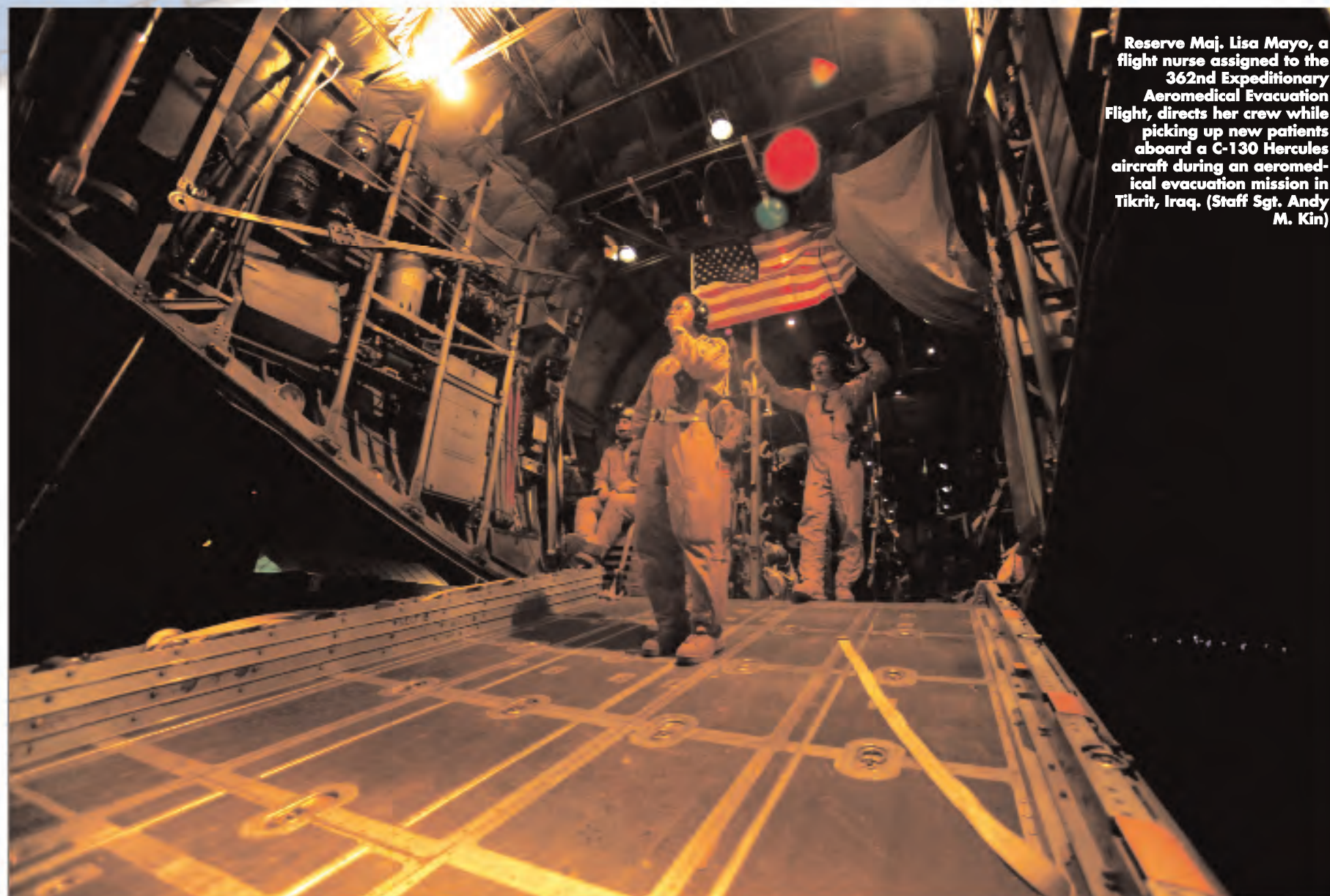


Capt. John Moody, 908th Airlift Wing, Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala., dons a survival suit during the wing's recent water-survival training at the Alabama River. (Gene H. Hughes)





Senior Airman Jason Henry trains an Afghan aerial porter to properly tie down cargo on a 60,000-pound Tunner cargo loader at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan. Airman Henry is an aerial porter with the 455th Expeditionary Aerial Port Squadron deployed from the Reserve's 69th APS at Joint Base Andrews, Md. (Tech. Sgt. Drew Nystrom)



Reserve Maj. Lisa Mayo, a flight nurse assigned to the 362nd Expeditionary Aeromedical Evacuation Flight, directs her crew while picking up new patients aboard a C-130 Hercules aircraft during an aeromedical evacuation mission in Tikrit, Iraq. (Staff Sgt. Andy M. Kin)



Staff Sgt. William Messer (top) and Tech. Sgt. John Glenister, security forces Airmen, advance up a staircase during a room-clearing training exercise at Eglin Air Force Base, Fla. Air Force Reserve Command's 919th Security Forces Squadron teams practiced entry and clearing tactics with varying targets and objectives. (Samuel King Jr.)



Airman First Class Jennifer Long of the 4th Combat Camera Squadron at March Air Reserve Base, Calif., takes photos during Global Medic 2010 at Bush Field in Augusta, Ga. Global Medic, a joint field training exercise for theater aeromedical evacuation system and ground medical components, replicates all aspects of combat medical service support. (Senior Master Sgt. Dennis Martin)



Staff Sgt. Dave Whitmill of the 315th Airlift Control Flight out of Joint Base Charleston, S.C., communicates with the pilot of a C-130 Hercules aircraft to stop at the end of the runway during Global Medic. (Senior Airman Jimmy L. Dang )



## Round the Reserve

A brief look at what's happening throughout Air Force Reserve Command

### Air Force Launches New Uniform Website

The Air Force has a new public website to help educate and inform Airmen about the service's dress and appearance standards and policies.

The Air Force Directorate of Service's Uniforms and Recognition Branch at Randolph Air Force Base, Texas, created the website in conjunction with the Air Force Personnel Center and several other agencies. The site features interactive slideshows, uniform regulations, detailed

photos and uniform policy updates from the Air Force Uniform Board.

Ruth Ewalt, Air Force Uniforms and Recognition Branch director, said the new website was developed to be a comprehensive online resource that is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week for Airmen stationed around the world.

"We wanted to create a place where all Airmen can view any uniform combination in detail," Mrs. Ewalt said. "This eliminates confusing rumors about the latest versions of Air Force uniforms."

Airmen also wanted an uncomplicated

website that was user friendly and did not require excessive navigation to find information about different combinations of the Air Force uniform.

"We needed a website that would not take more than two or three clicks of the mouse to get an answer to a uniform inquiry," she said.

Having this information on a public website ensures uniform changes and updates are available to the field in a timely manner rather than waiting for updates to Air Force Instruction 36-2903, which is being revised.

### Transition plan affects Reserve fighter units in three states

Air Force Reserve Command units in Arizona, New Mexico and Utah will change missions under an Air Force fighter transition plan announced in July.

All of the affected units are classic associate units that provide Reservists to fly and maintain regular Air Force aircraft and equipment.

The plan includes new basing alternatives for the F-35 Lightning and the transfer of F-16 Fighting Falcon and F-22 Raptor flying missions. F-35 aircraft basing will begin in the summer of 2013.

At Hill Air Force Base, Utah, the regular Air Force's 388th Fighter Wing shares its F-16s with the Reserve's 419th FW. They will continue their associate partnership when the 388th FW becomes an F-35 combat-coded wing.

Two squadrons of new F-35s will form at Luke AFB, Ariz. The base is home to the Air Force Reserve's 944th FW, which supports the Air Force F-16 fighter-training unit and its four squadrons. Half of the F-16 training mission at Luke AFB will move to Holloman AFB, N.M., to make room for F-35 training aircraft.

"By partnering in the F-35 training mission at Luke AFB, the Air Force Reserve will be part of the foundation of the Air Force's leading-edge fighter program," said Lt. Gen. Charles E. Stenner Jr., AFRC commander.

The Reserve will stay in the F-16 training program at Luke AFB with a cadre of experienced instructors to continue



The Air Force plans to start basing F-35s in 2013 at Hill Air Force Base, Utah, and Luke AFB, Ariz., where Air Force Reserve Command has associate units with regular Air Force wings.

training new F-16 pilots, who are still in high demand.

Also under the plan, one F-22 squadron at Holloman AFB will move to Tyndall AFB, Fla. The other squadron will disband and the aircraft distributed to other bases.

"This plan stabilizes the F-22 fleet with the least disruption in combat availability," General Stenner said. "The Air Force Reserve will continue to play an integral role flying and supporting the F-22 as we demonstrate our flexibility to support total force requirements."

Two F-16 training units will move to

Holloman to take advantage of the base's training airspace, ranges and support facilities. Holloman will not lose a Reserve presence after the F-22s move. Reservists from the 44th Fighter Group will remain in place and be joined by members of the 944th who conduct F-16 flight training.

"These Holloman actions posture the Air Force Reserve for more joint-training opportunities," General Stenner said. "The decision marries a critical training mission with an outstanding installation. We're excited to be a key element in these moves." ★

(AFRC News Service)

LOCKHEED MARTIN FILE PHOTO/TOM REYNOLDS

"The information will be updated quicker and more effectively," she said.

Putting the website in the public domain allows users to access it without their Common Access Card, which is helpful for Airmen researching uniform information from computers or smart phones off the military network.

While the new site is a valuable resource, Airmen should continue to work through their chain of command for clarification and guidance on Air Force dress and appearance standards and policies. For more information, visit the Air Force dress and appearance public website at <http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/dress/index.asp>. (Staff Sgt. Steve Grever, Air Force Personnel Center public affairs, Randolph AFB)

### Dec. 3 Deadline for Claiming Stop-Loss Special Pay

The 2009 War Supplemental Appropriation Act set aside \$534.4 million to compensate members, including those of the reserve components who served on active duty, who were affected by stop-loss between Sept. 11, 2001, and Sept. 30, 2009. Eligible individuals have until Dec. 3 to file their claim.

For more information or to download and submit a stop-loss claim application, visit the Air Reserve Personnel Center website at [https://arpc.afrc.af.mil/vPC-GR/StopLoss\\_intro.asp](https://arpc.afrc.af.mil/vPC-GR/StopLoss_intro.asp). ARPC counselors at the Total Force Service Center are available at 800-525-0102 to answer any questions regarding eligibility. (ARPC public affairs)

### Improved Physical Training Uniform Sized for Both Sexes

The new physical training uniform incorporates many improvements over the current uniform, including providing a better fit for both sexes.

"We have received much feedback from the field," said Maj. Eric Habersberger, deputy chief of the Air Force Uniform Office at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio. "We have made a strong effort to meet needs and ensure our Airmen have a comfortable, durable and well-fitting uniform. Sizing is aligned closer to commercial, off-the-

## Pope's Puns



CARTOON BY RETIRED MASTER SGT. W.C. POPE

shelf sizing, unlike the current PTU."

To accommodate both men and women, new sizes of PTU shorts range from X-small to XX-large. They are made in a boxer style out of 100 percent polyester with a full-fitting anti-odor treated liner. The trunk inseam has been lengthened approximately one inch, and side seam pockets have been added with closures. The waist elastic has been relaxed and also fitted with a barrel-lock drawstring for adjustable comfort.

The T-shirt is now available in a 100 percent polyester long sleeve and poly/cotton blend short sleeve. Both shirts contain a moisture management system that disperses moisture. The new polyester/cotton T-shirt also includes an anti-odor coating.

The running suit now has a "loose fit" for both men and women that allows more comfort and flexibility, while avoiding a baggy appearance. Both the pants and

jacket contain a white 100 percent polyester mini-mesh anti-odor liner that disperses moisture and minimizes odor.

Sizes now available for the running pants range from XX-small to XX-large, with different lengths available in X-short, short, regular, long and X-long for each size. The pants retain an elastic waistband that is relaxed for a comfortable fit with a barrel lock waist drawstring for adjustable tension. Pant pockets now have a Velcro closure. Each pant leg has a more relaxed elastic band and side zipper at the ankle to make it easier to dress over shoes.

The running jacket is available in sizes from XX-small to XX-large, with length variants of X-short, short, regular and long for each size. The hood has been removed as well as the arm vents, due to the breathability of the fabric. The two-inch reflective "V" has been upgraded to aid in greater visibility.



According to AFUO officials, by following label care instructions, each uniform item is designed to retain its moisture management and reflectivity capabilities when laundered at home.

Availability of the new physical training uniform is based on several factors, including duty location. Shipments to deployed locations will take priority, followed by Pacific and European theaters. Worldwide rollout of the trunks through the Army and Air Force Exchange Service was scheduled to take place in late August, while the running suit was supposed to be available sometime in late September. The T-shirt release date is still to be determined. According to AAFES officials, the uniform will be in short supply at first. But once all military clothing stores have received shipments, the uniform will be available via Internet purchase worldwide — probably in October.

Airmen in basic military training are receiving the current physical training uniform, not the improved version.

For locations receiving Air Force clothing from Army stores, availability is limited. However, improved PT uniforms will be available through special order at the servicing military clothing store.

For questions regarding any uniform item, visit the Air Force uniform website at <http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/dress/index.asp>. (Brad Jessmer, Air Force Uniform Office, Wright-Patterson AFB)

### Top Doc Questions Electronic Cigarette Safety

The Air Force surgeon general has issued a memo alerting all Airmen about safety concerns regarding electronic cigarettes, a new type of nicotine product.

Also known as “e-cigs,” electronic cigarettes are battery-operated devices that look like conventional cigarettes. The e-cig contains a cartridge filled with nicotine, which is delivered to the user as a vapor. Water vapor is emitted from the end of the device to mimic the appearance of smoke.

“Advertisements claim electronic cigarettes are a healthier way to smoke, but one sample tested by the Food and Drug Administration contained diethylene glycol, a toxic chemical used in antifreeze,” wrote Lt. Gen. (Dr.) Charles B. Green, the Air Force surgeon general.



TECH. SGT. TANYA KING

The 345th Airlift Squadron, a regular Air Force unit, was reactivated in August to fly the C-130J aircraft with members of the Air Force Reserve's 403rd Wing at Keesler Air Force Base, Miss.

### Associate unit program expands to include C-130J aircraft at Keesler

Keesler Air Force Base, Miss., is the home of a new active associate unit that blends the talents of Air Force Reserve and regular Air Force Airmen.

The 345th Airlift Squadron was officially reactivated in a ceremony Aug. 6 to form an association with the Reserve's 403rd Wing. The total force integration initiative not only provides regular Air Force and Reserve members with the opportunity to work and train together, but also helps reduce operational costs to taxpayers.

The 345th is the first C-130J active associate unit in the Air Force and the third active associate unit to activate under the 19th Airlift Wing at Little Rock AFB, Ark.

Within the next few months, the new squadron will integrate 112 aircraft maintenance, operations and support personnel with the 403rd WG's Citizen Airmen.

“The active-duty operations personnel have been great to work with,” said Lt. Col. Denson Tutwiler, 815th AS commander. “They understand Citizen Airmen. Some of them have backgrounds in strategic airlift, so they have worked with Reservists in the past.”

The 345th AS's new commander, Lt. Col. Craig Williams, understands that the success of the association depends on the working relationships forged between his people and the Reservists.

“Establishing and maintaining an

excellent working relationship is paramount,” Colonel Williams said. “There are some areas where we both need to learn and understand the culture in which we work. Once that is accomplished, all things are possible, just like in any other unit.”

Chief Master Sgt. Vincent Armata, 403rd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron superintendent, stressed the importance of seamlessly integrating the regular Air Force and Reserve members.

“The bottom line with total force integration is to train together and ensure that the deployment package is manned with people who have the right skill sets to accomplish the mission,” Chief Armata said.

Colonel Tutwiler said creating associations involving regular Air Force and Reserve, as well as the Air National Guard, offers benefits to the total force.

“The Air Force realized it could get much greater utilization from its aircraft by integrating active-duty with Reserve and Guard units,” he said. “Adding active-duty personnel will allow the 403rd WG to create more maintenance shifts and launch more aircraft. This truly is a case where the sum of the parts is greater than the whole.” ★

(Tech. Sgt. Ryan Labadens, 403rd WG public affairs, and Capt. Joe Knable, 19th Airlift Wing public affairs, contributed to this story.)

Other samples tested by the FDA contained cancer-causing agents, yet there are no health warnings on these products similar to those seen on conventional cigarette packages, the memo states.

“Manufacturers offer cartridges with decreasing levels of nicotine, with the idea that they can be used to help someone quit smoking,” Dr. Green wrote. “No studies have been done to demonstrate the safety or effectiveness of these products as tobacco cessation aids, and they are not approved by the FDA as a drug delivery device. Commanders also need to be aware that the cartridges used in these devices are replaceable and could be used to discreetly deliver substances other than nicotine.”

The memo states that due to the nature, appearance and safety concerns of electronic cigarettes, they are considered to be in the same category as tobacco products, the use of which is governed by Air Force Instruction 40-102, Tobacco Use in the Air Force. This new product will be included in the upcoming revision of AFI 40-102 due out this fall. (Air Force News Service)

### New Reserve Personnel Center Going Up 'Green'

The Headquarters Air Reserve Personnel Center's building, currently under construction at Buckley Air Force Base, Colo., is on schedule to be

certified as a cost-efficient and energy-saving facility by the U.S. Green Building Council.

According to ARPC officials, the new building will meet the criteria for a silver rating from USGBC's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design rating system.

“Our building is designed to receive this certification, which is earned based on energy efficiency, indoor environmental quality and other green features,” said Jon Gaines, ARPC's installation site manager and customer representative overseeing the construction.

LEED is a rating system developed by USGBC that offers third-party validation and a nationally accepted accreditation

### Westover aerial porters care for families of deployed members

By Staff Sgt. Andre Bowser

The passenger terminal at Westover Air Reserve Base, Mass., looked different Aug. 8.

The men and women in military uniform fit right in. However, the children wearing face paint, parents socializing over cake and jovial clowns blowing up balloons kind of stood out during a gathering of family and friends of deployed members of the 42nd Aerial Port Squadron.

The gathering gave families a chance to share their similar experiences of having a loved one deployed, said Senior Master Sgt. Timothy Maguire, squadron first sergeant.

“It also was an opportunity for them to really get to know us,” he said, adding that many Reservists assigned to the aerial port were present. The families — missing wives, husbands, fathers or mothers — came together at the half-way point of their loved ones' deployments.

Christine Adamiec, wife of Senior Airman David Adamiec, said she is due to have a baby in early October. She hopes her husband gets home before the baby arrives.

Surrounded by families going through similar challenges, she said she appreciates the company.

“I think it's really nice to have other people who are going through the same thing share their views,” she said.

Dawn Lawlor, wife of Master Sgt. Daniel Lawlor, said her husband has deployed many times. She likes giving advice and encouragement to the younger spouses.

“We should do this every deployment,” she said, adding that the event was the second one conducted by the families of aerial porters.

Caring for the families of military members who are deployed is a priority throughout the entire Air Force. In fact, the service mandates that single parents and families where both spouses are in the military have a family care plan in place for implementation during a deployment.

“It's a tool for deploying Airmen to ensure that their families are taken care of while they are gone,” said Master Sgt.



SENIOR AIRMAN GEORGE CLOUTIER

Blain Lawlor, 5-year-old son of Master Sgt. Daniel Lawlor and his wife, Dawn, helps blow up balloons for a party members of the 42nd Aerial Port Squadron at Westover Air Reserve Base, Mass., had for the families of deployed Reservists.

Frederick Hetu, 439th Mission Support Squadron first sergeant.

Airmen are required to develop a written plan (Air Force Form 357) to be maintained by the commander or first sergeant. The plan is designed to provide a smooth, rapid transfer of responsibilities while Airmen are absent.

More information about a family care plan is available by contacting a first sergeant or visiting [www.af.mil/shared/media/epubs/AFI36-2908.pdf](http://www.af.mil/shared/media/epubs/AFI36-2908.pdf). ★

(Sergeant Bowser is assigned to the 439th Airlift Wing public affairs office at Westover ARB.)



aimed at improving environmental efficiency of the design, construction and operation of buildings.

Once finished, ARPC's building will earn the LEED silver rating for its various green features, including: site sustainability (including access to mass transportation and availability of bicycle storage space); low-impact on the surrounding habitat; water-efficient landscaping; roof that minimizes the effect of summertime heat islands; use of on-site renewable energy; indoor environmental quality; and storage, collection and use of recyclable materials.

Construction of ARPC's new building began in July 2009. The building is expected to be ready to move into by April 2011, Mr. Gaines said. *(Mike Molina, ARPC public affairs)*

### Tricare Program Targets 'Gray Area' Retirees

For the first time, members of the Retired Reserve who are not yet age 60, the so-called "gray area" retirees, can purchase Tricare health coverage for themselves and their eligible family members with the Sept. 1 launch of a

new program called Tricare Retired Reserve.

"This new program offers a health coverage opportunity for "gray area" Guardsmen and Reservists who served America honorably, setting a proud example for today's forces," said Rear Adm. Christine Hunter, deputy director of the Tricare Management Activity. "Tricare Retired Reserve will provide an outstanding health benefit."

Retired Reservists may qualify to purchase TRR coverage if they are under the age of 60 and are not eligible for, or enrolled in, the Federal Employees

Health Benefits program. They must also be members of the Retired Reserve of a reserve component and qualified for non-regular retirement. Information on how to qualify for and purchase TRR is available online at [www.tricare.mil/trr](http://www.tricare.mil/trr).

For calendar year 2010, the TRR member-only monthly premium is \$388.31 (\$4,659.72 yearly), and the member and family monthly premium is \$976.41 (\$11,716.92 yearly). Premiums will be adjusted annually.

The comprehensive health-care coverage provided by the premium-based TRR is similar to Tricare Standard. After purchasing TRR, members will receive the Tricare Retired Reserve Handbook, which includes details about covered services, how to get care and who to contact for assistance. *(Tricare news release)*

### Personnel Center Seeks to Convert Paper Records to Electronic Format

Employees at the Air Reserve Personnel Center in Denver are working to securely convert thousands of paper and microfiche personnel records to an electronic format for Air National Guardsmen and Air Force Reservists.

"These records represent Reservists' careers from the moment they are gained to the Reserve until death, and even beyond, because then we use the record to provide service to the family," said Jackie Bing, the center's director of records quality management.

Phased computer scanning of military personnel records and images is helping Air Force Reserve officials move away from a paper-dependent environment, Ms. Bing said.

The group has converted more than 120,000 paper records to an automated records management system on an accelerated schedule since the effort started two years ago. This system stores millions of retrievable documents on more than a million records using secure network storage technology, Ms. Bing said.

ARPC officials are continuing the process by converting 130,000 paper records of nonparticipating Reservists, retirees and discharged members and 6 million microfiche images by a March 31 target date.

More than 100 civilian contractors are scanning the files using high-speed scanners, eliminating the previous process of printing out a record, making a copy and then scanning it, Ms. Bing said. The newer process allows more work to be done more quickly.

Andy Hamilton, a quality assurance evaluator for ARPC, said the team has a 100 percent quality review prior to downloading the records to the automated system and after the scanning.

The Air Force is trying to create an environment in which documents are created within the system and go into the archives, he said.

"With the use of smart forms, we're trying to make this a 100-percent paperless environment," he said. *(Christen N. McCluney, Emerging Media, Defense Media Activity, Washington, D.C.)* ★

### Dover EOD specialist earns awards for combat actions

By Capt. Marnee A.C. Losurdo

A 512th Airlift Wing Reservist received the Bronze Star and the Air Force Combat Action Medal during a ceremony Aug. 7 at Dover Air Force Base, Del.

Tech. Sgt. Stephen J. Kaufman, a 512th Civil Engineer Squadron Explosive Ordnance Disposal Flight team leader, earned the medals while serving with the 755th Bravo EOD Flight at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan, supporting Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom.

The Bronze Star Medal is the fourth-highest U.S. armed forces combat award and is given for acts of bravery or meritorious service. The Air Force Combat Action Medal recognizes Airmen involved in direct fighting situations, risking their lives in an enemy engagement. Sergeant Kaufman is only the second member of the 512th AW to earn this honor.

"I'm proud to present these honors to Sergeant Kaufman," said Col. Randal L. Bright, 512th AW commander. "He took direct, hostile fire daily while contributing to the war effort."

"Under these harsh conditions, he assisted with the destruction of 108 unexploded ordnance items and clearance of almost 7,000 miles of treacherous roadway."

From September 2009 to March 2010, Sergeant Kaufman provided explosive ordnance support to British, Danish and Estonian forces in Afghanistan. He took part in many operations; however, he said he would never forget Operation Dark Rest.

In February, he was supporting the Brigade Reconnaissance Force, an elite 100-man British unit in the United Kingdom's Royal Marines. The BRF task was to kill or capture Taliban in central Helmand.

During a mission Feb. 26, Sergeant Kaufman and his EOD team were on patrol when his friend, BRF Sgt. Paul Fox, stepped on an improvised explosive device. The 35-year-old Royal Marine was killed instantly.

Although severely shaken by the loss of his friend, Sergeant Kaufman kept his focus.

"When you watch your best friend get blown up ... you just make sure the job gets done so nobody else dies," he said.

After ensuring his three-man EOD team was free of injuries, Sergeant Kaufman and his men searched the area for more mines, clearing the site for a helicopter to extract Sergeant Fox.



**Tech. Sgt. Stephen J. Kaufman, an explosive ordnance disposal team leader with the 512th Airlift Wing, Dover Air Force Base, Del., spent six months in Afghanistan supporting British, Danish and Estonian forces in clearing insurgent cells throughout Kandahar, Helmand and Zabul provinces. (U.S. Air Force photo)**

After the helicopter arrived and took off, the unit came under small-arms fire. The EOD technicians took position, suppressed fire and covered the flanks of the British elite forces. Sporadic gunfire continued for four hours before the BRF overcame the enemy and took out a Taliban commander.

That night, four Taliban were spotted replacing the IEDs where Sergeant Fox had been killed. Sergeant Kaufman and his team accompanied the BRF. They followed the Taliban to their compound where the BRF captured one and killed six members of the IED cell responsible for laying the mine that took Sergeant Fox's life. Returning from the strike, Sergeant Kaufman and his crew cleared the two IEDs placed by the insurgents.

"It was a catastrophic loss," said Sergeant Kaufman, referring to his friend's death. "(Sergeant Fox) was a combat engineer, so his loss impacted the unit's ability to operate."

"We took it right back to the Taliban," he said. "It was immediate retribution." ★

*(Captain Losurdo is assigned to the 512th AW public affairs office at Dover AFB.)*

## It's Your Money

By Ralph Lunt

### 'On your left'

A verbal warning of "on your left" or a simple ting of a bell are welcome sounds when I have the opportunity to jog the Mount Vernon Trail in Washington, D.C.

That little warning from the cyclists before they whizz by takes away the uncertainty and surprise that can take your breath away when a rider speeds by without warning.



When it comes to financial markets, uncertainty is an unwelcome guest. Things like taxes, elections and unemployment all weigh on investors' minds as they decide whether to put money at risk in equity or bond markets or leave it in "principal protected" investments like a six-month certificate of deposit paying a whopping .8 percent.

As you make financial decisions, long- and short-term, I'd recommend you be your own early warning system so as not to be surprised when life throws you an unexpected curve. Take for instance the e-mail I received from a reader in Arizona. A Reservist who has done an excellent job of saving and preparing didn't see the need for any survivor benefits when her active-duty husband retired. Quite frankly, she was spot on. ... assuming she stays healthy and is able to work.

Life does come at you fast, though, and illness and accidents can quickly change things. So much better to run through the "what if's" before you make important financial decisions.

Here are some I'd suggest: What if I lost my spouse? Would I be able to keep the house and send the kids to school? What if Social Security or military retirement income was reduced or means tested? Do my plans allow for reduced income? Or am I maxed out and counting on cost-of-living adjustments? What if my children take out huge loans for college? Will they get employment that will allow them to pay it back and live a decent life?

You get the point. Plan for the unexpected possibilities, and take as much uncertainty as you can out of the equation. Remember those bikers on the Mount Vernon trail. ★

*(Editor's note: This feature is designed to provide financial advice and information of a general nature. Individuals should conduct their own research and consult a financial adviser before making any financial decisions. Based in Cleveland, Ohio, Mr. Lunt is a certified financial planner and vice president of a financial planning and consulting firm. He is also a lieutenant colonel in the Air Force Reserve, serving as the reserve forces director for the Great Lakes region of the Civil Air Patrol adviser's program.)*



# Help is just a wingman away

# Suicide

By Bo Joyner

It's a simple message that Lt. Col. Dave Ubelhor brings up every chance he gets: The best weapons in the war against suicide in the Air Force Reserve are a good wingman and the willingness to seek help. As Air Force Reserve Command's chief mental health consultant, Colonel Ubelhor spends a great deal of his time these days

## AFRC and AF Suicides

Number of suicides/rate per 100,000

Year	AFRC	Total AF
CY 03	9/12.0	58/10.8
CY 04	9/11.9	72/12.5
CY 05	9/11.9	49/9.5
CY 06	8/10.8	60/11.0
CY 07	10/14.1	61/13.4
CY 08	5/7.4	54/9.4
CY 09	8/11.8	64/12.7
CY 10	7/14*	57/15.6*
7YR AVG	8/11.4	60/11.4

\* CY10 shows number of suicides as of Sept. 21 and an extrapolated rate per 100,000 estimate for the year.

7YR AVG is average for CY 03 through CY 09.

addressing the topic of suicide prevention. He tracks all the numbers and leads the command's effort to make sure suicide prevention stays front and center in the minds of its members.

Across the military services as a whole, the numbers are alarming. Suicide rates in the Army and Marine Corps have skyrocketed in recent years; and for the first time since reliable statistics have been kept, they are now outpacing the suicide rate among the general U.S. population.

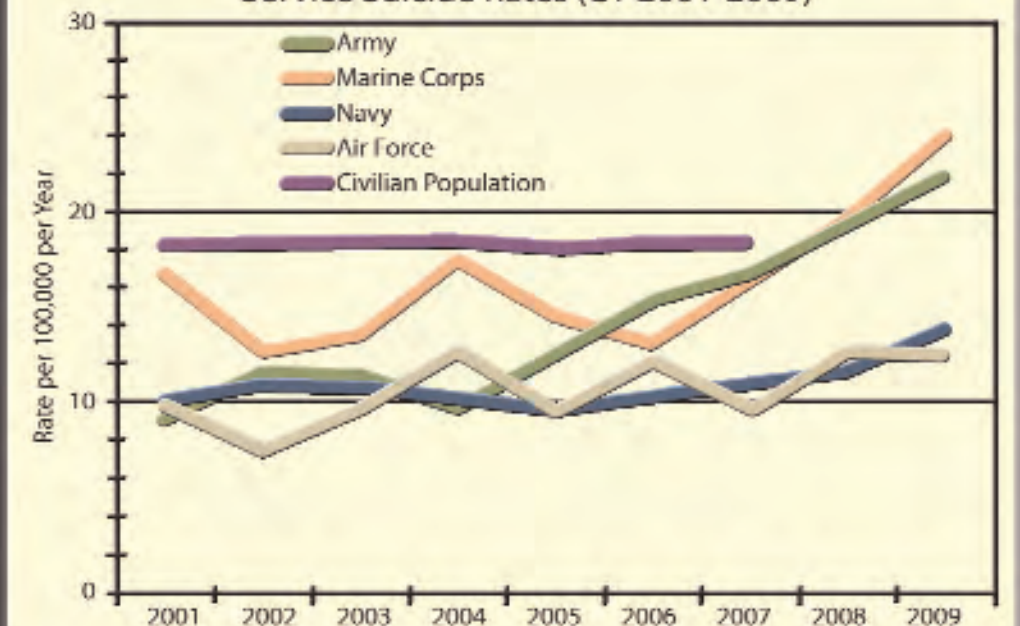
As the chart at right shows, the Air Force and Navy have fared better in the battle to prevent suicides; although total Air Force numbers for calendar year 2010 have risen. But, as Colonel Ubelhor is quick to point out, there is always room for improvement.

"It's a bit of a cliché to say, but even one suicide is one too many," Colonel Ubelhor said.

So far this year, AFRC has recorded seven suicides. And while that is a relatively small number, the fact that seven Reservists have taken their own lives this year is a tragedy — not just for the seven members, but for their families, friends and co-workers as well as the command as a whole.

"Whenever any member of the Reserve team dies, it's a terrible thing, but when one of our own takes his or her own

Service Suicide Rates (CY 2001-2009)



life, the sadness, confusion and grief felt are multiplied," the colonel said. "And the people closest to the person who committed suicide are often left with a lot of unanswered questions. They may feel guilty and wonder if there was anything they could have done to save their friend's life."

The Air Force transitioned to a community-based suicide prevention program more than 15 years ago. And indeed, there are things all members of the Reserve team can do to help fight the war against suicides throughout the command.

"Most of the things we can do revolve around being an



active wingman," Colonel Ubelhor said. "One of the first things we can do is be vigilant in looking for the common risk factors for suicide and the warning signs of suicide."

Common risk factors for suicide include problems with relationships, finances, career and unemployment. Other risks include disciplinary or legal issues, substance abuse and the normal stresses that Reservists face when transitioning from one status to another.

Some of the common warning signs that somebody might be contemplating suicide are listed in the chart at right. A good wingman will be able to pick up on these warning signs and will have the courage to talk to the person exhibiting them about what he is going through.

"We're not asking Reservists to be therapists or counselors — we have people trained to do these things — but we are asking our Reservists to be able to spot the risk factors and warning signs of suicide and help people who are in trouble. Good wingmen help others address risk factors before they get worse and are able to spot the warning signs of suicide and ensure the individual gets in touch with the people who are specially trained to help," Colonel Ubelhor said.

"If you are talking to a friend or co-

### Common Suicide Warning Signs

- \* Talking about hurting or killing oneself.
- \* Looking for ways to kill oneself (seeking access to firearms, available pills, other means).
- \* Talking or writing about death, dying or suicide when out of the ordinary for the person.
- \* Texting an illogical message or saying "goodbye."
- \* Feeling rage, uncontrolled anger or seeking revenge.
- \* Acting recklessly or engaging in risky activities.
- \* Feeling trapped, like there's no way out or no hope for the future.
- \* Increasing alcohol or drug use.
- \* Withdrawing from friends, family and becoming antisocial.
- \* Feeling anxious, agitated or experiencing changes in sleep patterns.
- \* Experiencing dramatic mood changes.
- \* Seeing no reason for living or having no sense of purpose in life.

**A** **Ask your wingman**  
 \* Have the courage to ask the question, but stay calm.  
 \* As the question directly: Are you thinking of killing yourself?

**C** **Care for your wingman**  
 \* Calmly control the situation; do not use force; be safe.  
 \* Actively listen to show understanding and produce relief.  
 \* Remove any means that could be used for self-injury.

**E** **Escort your wingman**  
 \* Never leave your wingman alone.  
 \* Escort to chain of command, chaplain, behavioral health professional or primary care provider.  
 \* Call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, 1-800-273-8255 (TALK).

all times.

In addition to looking out for suicide warning signs in their wingmen, it's important that members of the Reserve team look out for themselves.

"It's vital that we all monitor our own psychological health and seek help when we need it," Colonel Ubelhor said.

There are a number of places to go for assistance. Some people might prefer to talk to their chaplain or minister, while others might feel more at ease talking to a behavioral health professional or their primary care provider.

that the person may be suicidal or the threat may be imminent, it's important to remember the acronym ACE," the colonel said.


ACE stands for ask, care and escort. ACE is a DOD-wide campaign, and all members of the Air Force team are encouraged to carry an ACE card (like the one shown here) with them at

"The important thing is to get help," Colonel Ubelhor said. "For years, there has been a stigma associated with seeking assistance, especially in the military. People have to realize that voluntarily seeking help is better than any of the alternatives."

One place Reservists can turn to for help is the command's network of psychological health advocates. AFRC's Directorate of Health Services has collaborated with the command's Yellow Ribbon Program to establish three regional PHAP teams to serve as educators and case facilitators.

The teams assist AFRC leaders and help connect members to services located at Reserve medical units, active-duty medical treatment facilities or in the member's community.

The chart at right gives the phone number for each of the three regional PHAP teams.



**Region Phone Numbers**

South Region: (678) 471-6114  
 West Region: (707) 631-8261  
 North Region (937) 470-5544



While Colonel Ubelhor believes that good wingmen are the best weapon in the battle against suicides, he believes education is a close second.

"The two go hand in hand. A good wingman is an educated wingman," he said, adding that very often a wingman is a family member and an educated wingman is more likely to actively save lives.

There are a number of websites designed to teach people about suicide and suicide prevention. The list on the right is a good place to start.

Perhaps the best place to get started is AFRC's new wingman project website: <http://afrc.wingmantoolkit.org>. The front page of the site is shown above, although the site will be changing. In addition to providing a host of features, the site tells the story of perhaps the ultimate wingman: Capt. Bob Pardo.

Flying over North Vietnam in 1967, Captain Pardo's F-4 was hit by enemy fire and damaged but not as badly as the F-4 flown by Capt. Earl Aman. Instead of returning to safety, Captain Pardo risked his own life to "push" Captain Aman's jet until they both could eject safely over Laos, where they were rescued. But, the story doesn't end there.

For years, Captain Pardo continued to care for his friend and wingman through years of disability brought on by Lou Gehrig's disease.

The story is a great example of how wingmen take care of each other, even in the worst of times. It's that wingman spirit that has helped AFRC keep its number of suicides down in the past and will lead the command in its war on suicide into the future. ★

### Helping Resources

- \* AFRC Wingman Project:  
<http://afrc.wingmantoolkit.org>
- \* Air Force Suicide Prevention Program:  
<http://afspp.afms.mil>
- \* National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:  
<http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org>
- \* Military Pathways:  
<http://mentalhealthscreening.org>
- \* Military One Source:  
<http://www.militaryonesource.com>
- \* Suicide Prevention Action Network:  
<http://www.spanusa.org>
- \* Suicide Prevention Resource Center:  
<http://www.sprc.org>
- \* Survivors of Suicide:  
<http://www.survivorsofsuicide.com>
- \* American Association of Suicidology:  
<http://www.suicidology.org>
- \* National Center for PTSD:  
<http://www.ptsd.va.gov>
- \* Yellow Ribbon Program:  
<http://www.dodyrrp.mil>



# Breaking New Ground

**First Reserve pilot nearing end of test pilot school training**

Story by Bo Joyner, photo by Greg Davis

**Maj. Kevin Hall, the first Air Force Reserve pilot selected to attend the U.S. Air Force Test Pilot School, is on track to complete TPS in December.**

**T**he first Air Force Reserve pilot selected to attend the U.S. Air Force Test Pilot School is nearing the end of his year-long test pilot training program. Maj. Kevin Hall is on track to complete TPS at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif., in December, earning a master of science degree in flight test engineering from Air University for his 48 weeks of intense classroom and cockpit work.

Test Pilot School is where the Air Force's top pilots, navigators and engineers learn how to conduct flight tests and generate the data needed to carry out test missions. It trains experimental test pilots, flight test engineers and flight test navigators to carry out tests and evaluations of new aerospace weapon systems.

Admission is extremely competitive, and only the best and brightest are selected to attend one of the two classes conducted each year. One class begins in January, while the other begins in July. Most classes comprise 12 pilots and a combination of 12 engineers and navigators. All students are required to have extensive scientific and engineering knowledge as well as superior flying skills.

Major Hall served on active duty for 10 years, flying F-16s, F-117s and T-38s, before joining the Air Force Reserve and transferring to the 370th Flight Test Squadron at Edwards in 2009 with an eye on being selected for TPS.

"It's truly an honor to be the first Air Force Reserve pilot selected for Test Pilot School," Major Hall said. "Hopefully, this will pave the way for more Reservists in the future." (Note: A second Reservist, Maj. Olivia Elliott, an A-10 pilot with the 442nd Fighter Wing at Whiteman AFB, Mo., has been selected to attend TPS in 2011.)

After graduating from TPS, Major Hall could be assigned to any of a number of flight test squadrons at Edwards where he will be responsible for flight testing upgrades or new components on Air Force aircraft. The Air Force Flight Test Center at Edwards has played a vital role in the development of virtually every aircraft to enter the Air Force inventory since World War II.

Wherever he ends up, Major Hall said he will be "living his dream" by flying as an Air Force test pilot.

"For me, this is the ultimate job," he said. "It's a perfect fit for someone like me who has a passion for flying and for the technical and scientific aspects of flight."

Lt. Col. Claude Swammy always thought that Major Hall would make a good Air Force test pilot. Colonel Swammy, who currently serves as the chief of safety for the Air National Guard's 168th Air Refueling Wing at Eielson AFB, Alaska, was working a Reserve tour at the 370th in 2008 when he heard that the TPS was thinking about acquiring the first home-grown Reserve test pilot.

"I immediately thought of Major Hall," Colonel Swammy said. "We were in the same pilot training class, and I knew he was perfect for Test Pilot School."

"I was able to align Kevin with the 370th leadership to explore transferring to the Reserve then competing for a Reserve Test Pilot School slot. The rest is history, and Kevin is doing great as a full-time Reservist and TPS student. He's a model officer, patriot and someone who can truly make a difference." ★



## Test pilot school has rich history

**A**s long as the United States has had military airplanes, it has needed skilled test pilots. From the earliest days when the nation's entire air force consisted of two Wright biplanes to today's fleet of ultra modern and highly sophisticated fighters, bombers and transporters, there has been a need for highly adaptive, critical-thinking flight test professionals to evaluate aerospace weapon systems.

In 1914, the Army set up its first dedicated aeronautical research and development establishment at North Island in San Diego. Before World War I had ended, it transferred the function to McCook Field in Dayton, Ohio. There, a fledgling flight testing squadron began producing what would become known as "test pilots."

A young lieutenant named Jimmy Doolittle was among the pioneers who honed his skills and tested aircraft at McCook Field.

Since that time, some of the very best pilots in the world, including Buzz Aldrin, Chuck Yeager and Gus Grissom, have attended U.S. Air Force Test Pilot School, which today is located at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif. ★

(Staff reports)





**Staff Sgt. Jorge Rodriguez (right), then a senior airman, maneuvers around a building during Phoenix Readiness at Fort Dix, N.J. Sergeant Rodriguez was recently medically retired and is awaiting a heart transplant. (Staff Sgt. Jeanette M. Copeland)**

# Combat Camera's Hero

**Battle-tested photographer waiting for new heart**

**By Tech. Sgt. Christine Jones**

**S**taff Sgt. Jorge Rodriguez didn't want to retire from the Air Force. But on Aug. 21 he did, in a ceremony with the 4th Combat Camera Squadron at March Air Reserve Base, Calif., where he served as a photographer for 10 years.

Sergeant Rodriguez, who left his native Cuba as a political refugee at the age of 8, served in the Coast Guard for five years before joining the Air Force Reserve. During his 10-year Reserve career, he voluntarily deployed to Iraq three times where he supported Operation Iraqi Freedom and documented a critical time in the history of that country.

Often serving with Army units on patrol, Sergeant Rodriguez survived many close calls. However, it wasn't until 2007, after he returned from his third deployment, that he found himself in an unexpected battle for his life.

While on a dismounted patrol during deployment, he fell into a ditch, tearing the rotator cuff in his left shoulder. Back in the states, Sergeant Rodriguez had surgery to repair the dam-

age. While in the recovery room, he suffered two heart attacks and a stroke.

"They told my sister I had two hours to live. ... but I didn't die," he said with a smile.

Today, Sergeant Rodriguez's heart functions with the help of a pump he carries with him everywhere he goes. He said his own heart pumps but "not enough to sustain life."

Master Sgt. Randy Hopp, 4th CCS first sergeant, describes Sergeant Rodriguez as a humble man. Sergeant Hopp visited Sergeant Rodriguez at the hospital, arriving just minutes before one of the photographer's surgeries.

"You didn't need to go out of your way," Sergeant Hopp recalls Sergeant Rodriguez saying to him.

"The man is about to have open heart surgery, and he is worried about me!" Sergeant Hopp said.

Several other members of the squadron visited Sergeant Rodriguez during his stay in the hospital, and they share the same thought: Despite what the sergeant is going through, he

still remains the same person.

"I truly admire his courage, selflessness and dedication to country. He exemplifies the warrior spirit," said Staff Sgt. Erica Knight, a fellow photographer. "I was absolutely amazed that his ever-present charm had not been affected by what had happened to him."

In fact, Sergeant Rodriguez's strength of character has set such an example for members of his unit that they've coined a new phrase: "What would Jorge do?"

During Sergeant Rodriguez's first deployment to Iraq in 2004, he captured imagery of coalition forces in Ramadi, Al-Asad, Fallujah and other locations. One year later, he deployed to Iraq again, this time to Baghdad, where he was assigned to the Army's 256th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division. He was based at Camp Liberty, covering day and night operations.

"We all know Jorge for his easy demeanor, the twinkle in his eye and that easy smile," said Chief Master Sgt. Edward Mogul, who was assigned to the Joint Combat Camera Management Unit at Camp Liberty in 2005.

During Sergeant Rodriguez's 2005 deployment, he survived several close calls, including one in which a fuse lit on an improvised explosive device under his Humvee. Fortunately, the IED didn't detonate. Sergeant Rodriguez was later recognized for his contributions during that deployment with the 2005 Darryl G. Winters Award, an award that recognizes combat camera people who provide excellent support, despite the possibility of placing themselves in harm's way.

"On one mission, a sniper attempted to shoot him in the head. In a split-second decision, he moved, and the bullet landed in the wall right next to him," said Lt. Col. Bruce Bender, 4th CCS commander. "Pretty close call there, but, thankfully and

by the grace of God, he was able to sneak away from that one and come home to us safely."

Sergeant Rodriguez volunteered for his third deployment to Iraq in 2007 when he was assigned to the U.S. Special Operations Command in Balad. He documented multiple helicopter assaults into known insurgent areas. He earned the Air Force Combat Action Medal for his actions during a firefight that resulted in one of his colleagues, Senior Master Sgt. Tom Coffin, being wounded.

"He was the best 'battle buddy' you could want," said Sergeant Coffin, who recently retired.

For Sergeant Rodriguez, the 4th CCS represents the epitome of esprit de corps, and he says the squadron is like one big family. Despite hopes of returning to duty, Sergeant Rodriguez was medically retired from the military Aug. 21. Regardless of his retirement status, members of the squadron have conveyed that they will always consider him part of their family.

"He would have stayed longer. He would still be here," said Sergeant Coffin.

Sergeant Rodriguez is awaiting a heart transplant.

"They have called him twice with a heart, got him to the hospital, prepped him for surgery and both times the heart was a bad fit," Sergeant Coffin said.

"Jorge is my hero. ... He is combat camera's hero," said Tech. Sergeant Neil Ballecer, a videographer. "If I can be respected and admired half as much as my hero Jorge, I know I will have lived a good life."

Sergeant Rodriguez is considering a stem cell therapy trial that may help re-grow the damaged sections of his heart.

"He is truly a fighter and a warrior, and will always be combat camera," Sergeant Knight said. ★

*(Sergeant Jones is assigned to the 4th CCS at March ARB.)*



**During his 10-year career, Sergeant Rodriguez volunteered to deploy to Iraq three times. Here are some samples of his photographs. (Above) Soldiers help Master Sgt. Tom Coffin walk to a medical evacuation helicopter after he was shot. (Top right) Soldiers search a building north of Baghdad. (Right) Capt. Ryan Keys mourns the death and gives thanks for the life of Staff Sgt. Jorge PenaRomero, who was killed when his vehicle struck an improvised explosive device.**





Westover Air Reserve Base's isochronal dock is rapidly becoming the only facility of its kind in Air Force Reserve Command. Plans are already in the works for the site to become the sole ISO dock in AFRC in less than two years. Presently, the site is slated to service 26 planes by next year, more than double that of any ISO dock in AFRC.

# 'Good Changes'

Westover embraces improvements in C-5 inspection process

By Andre Bowser

The Air Force is paring down the number of locations where vital maintenance on its fleet of giant C-5 aircraft is performed. When the consolidation is complete, Westover Air Reserve Base, Mass., will continue to be the location — one of only three in the Air Force — of a regional isochronal inspection dock responsible for keeping the aircraft in the fight.

The C-5 isochronal inspections were performed at eight sites: Westover; Dover Air Force Base, Del.; Travis AFB, Calif.; Lackland AFB, Texas; Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio; Martinsburg, W.Va.; Stewart Air National Guard Base, N.Y.; and Memphis, Tenn.

By 2012, Westover is expected to assume responsibility for performing half of all C-5 minor isochronal inspections across the entire Air Force. The work will include Air Force Reserve Command, regular Air Force and ANG C-5s.

Lt. Col. William R. Kountz Jr., 439th Maintenance Group commander, said Westover is primed and ready to assume the role.

"The facilities we have here and our proximity to Dover have put Westover in a prime position," said Colonel Kountz, who commands more than 700 maintenance workers and oversees all of the maintenance performed on the base's 16 C-5B aircraft. "Also, since we're the only base in AFRC to have the B model C-5 and we are converting to the M model, it's a better fit for us as an airlift-oriented base."

Taking on newer and more difficult challenges has become part of the job for many of the workers in the isochronal inspection dock, where living by innovation is the order of the day.

## Regionalized Isochronal Docks

Air Force plans to consolidate its isochronal inspection docks call for Dover AFB to assume full responsibility for C-5 major inspections, relieving all other bases including Travis of that work load. Martinsburg will take over for Stewart ANGB and Memphis. Westover will be responsible for C-5 minor inspections for the entire fleet.

The shift is a good example of total force integration in action, said Capt. Robert Dossman, maintenance flight commander at the isochronal inspection dock at Westover.

"The regionalized isochronal inspection dock has done very well at working as an integrated team," he said, citing a culture of process improvement, resource management and a desire to excel. "We have created several benchmarks to improve the process, and we have shared these with our RISO partners in the Air National Guard and active duty."

Captain Dossman said the people working at his dock have increased their productivity and reduced the average number of days it takes them to complete an inspection from more than 50 to less than 20.

"We're taking 19 days now on average to fully inspect and repair the aircraft," he said, adding that recently his crew was able to send a plane through the process in as little as 15 days. "And that 15-day aircraft had more than 1,200 discrepancies we had to repair."

While discrepancies can range from minor superficial problems to major mechanical issues, Captain Dossman said his team treats every ding and dent seriously.

"That's how we streamlined the process flow from 50 to 19 days," he said.

The captain said that using Air Force Smart Operations for the 21st Century and LEAN techniques allowed his facility to map out the entire maintenance process several times, which resulted in a markedly improved work flow.

"We did it by approaching the entire inspection as a repeatable process, regardless of the tail flash or owning agency," he said.

## By the Numbers

Although the average number of flow days for the isochronal dock now stands at 19, things haven't always been that way.

Senior Master Sgt. Lee Hareld, maintenance flight superintendent at the isochronal inspection dock, said as recently as 2008 the average number of maintenance flow days was 50, more than double the current number. Sergeant Hareld said a lack of manpower and a slow flow of supplies contributed to the high number.

Manning increases in the isochronal dock helped bring that number down. The dock crew comprises more than 100 people, including Reservists serving on active-duty orders, air reserve technicians, regular Air Force members and civilians. Sergeant Hareld said they all meld together in a large team spread over two shifts spanning seven days each week. He said the process will improve when the isochronal inspection dock receives an all-weather tail enclosure.

Sergeant Hareld noted that while the regionalized isochronal inspection dock concept dates back to 2005, the actual implementation started at Westover in March 2008. At that time, two additional bases — Lackland and Wright-

Patterson — actively and aggressively supported the C-5 mission for AFRC.

The three bases competed for the limited resources that will soon flow solely and freely to Westover. Sergeant Hareld said that additional personnel and equipment will only make the process of inspecting and fixing the aircraft more efficient.

Westover and Lackland continue to complete minor inspections. Wright-Patterson completed its last inspection in early 2010, Sergeant Hareld said. He said while Lackland is slated to phase out of its C-5 isochronal inspections by the end of 2010, Westover is continually increasing its work load and is ahead of the target to assume full responsibility by 2012.

Next year, Westover expects to increase the number of C-5 aircraft serviced from 22 to 26, Sergeant Hareld said.

## The Task Tracker

Tracking the flow of C-5 aircraft through the isochronal inspection dock is a full-time job. Captain Dossman credits Tech. Sgt. Jason Reynolds with creating a workflow tracker that has helped him monitor the maintenance process and allocate resources more accurately while managing the flow of parts and other resources to the planes.

Captain Dossman said tracking the number of hours and resources, as well as the personnel distribution, dedicated to each aircraft while it cycles through the maintenance process has allowed his team to streamline the process by employing best practices and constantly evolving.

The "task tracker" developed by Sergeant Reynolds has been lauded by Air Mobility Command, and it is on its way to becoming the standard for tracking minor inspections.

Colonel Kountz said the regional isochronal dock "solidifies us as a total force partner in the C-5 community. It's good for us and keeping us in the fight."

A confluence of hard work and good ideas is at work at Westover, Colonel Kountz said, summing everything up in two words: "Good changes." ★

(Mr. Bowser is assigned to the 439th AW public affairs office at Westover ARB.)



Tech. Sgt. Joaquin Pedro, a crew chief and air reserve technician for the 439th Maintenance Squadron, inspects the interior of a C-5 during a recent isochronal inspection.



# PORT DAWGS



Aerial porters at Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan, load aid and supplies onto a C-130 Hercules from the 908th Airlift Wing, Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala., in support of humanitarian relief efforts in Pakistan. (Staff Sgt. Andy M. Kin)

## For more than 60 years, aerial porters have been moving the world

By Gene Vandeventer

**E**ver since the employment of cargo aircraft, aerial porters, or “port dawgs,” have been hustling cargo and successfully expediting passengers on and off airplanes in support of military, national and international airlift missions originating from concrete tarmacs as well as dusty dirt airstrips.

Over the years, whether organized in air cargo resupply squadrons, air terminals, mobile aerial port squadrons, air mobility squadrons, air mobility support squadrons or aerial port squadrons, aerial porters have proven their worth many times over. From providing flight crews with on-time, precise load documentation and cargo to natural disaster victims with life-saving supplies, port dawgs are the supply chain heroes of today.

The Air Force port dawg history is a proud one dating back to the Vietnam War years and before. Originally, the



enlisted Air Force specialty code now known as 2T2X1 was split into two distinct career fields: 605X1 air cargo and 605X0 passenger service.

In Vietnam, at some hot landing zones where forklifts were non-existent, air cargo specialists, working in concert with aircraft commanders and loadmasters, perfected engine-running offloads to get the equipment unloaded quickly and the aircraft back in the air in the shortest amount of time.

C-130 aircraft commanders, after landing and taxiing, would run-up the engines, and loadmasters would unlock the pallets. When the aircraft sped forward, the cargo pallets, called 463Ls, would slide out the back in a cloud of dust as the aircraft became airborne once again. Precious cargo loads that would otherwise take many minutes to off-load would be extracted from the aircraft in seconds and distributed by the ever mobile port dawgs.

In the mid-1970s, the Air Force saw the need to train Airmen in several over-manned specialties to gain war-skill knowledge in AFSCs critically under-manned and over-utilized. Enlisted administrators and personnelists, among others, were given "hands-on" training in the security forces and aerial port duties. Once they were certified, these people obtained war-skill secondary AFSCs.

From the Berlin Airlift years of 1948-1949, utilizing C-47 and C-54 airframes, through the early years of the Vietnam War using C-7 and C-123 aircraft, material handling equipment wasn't all that different. However, with the introduction of larger aircraft like the C-130, C-141, C-5, KC-135, KC-10 and C-17, with their cargo holds accessible through doors/ramps both fore and aft, MHE changed to meet new requirements.

Larger aircraft necessitated larger loading equipment. Along came a 60K loader called "The Tunner" after the late Lt. Gen. William H. Tunner, which features a deck made to be lowered to a scant 39 inches off the ground or raised to a height of 18.5 feet. It combined trucking and lifting into one motorized configuration utilizing rollers and a conveyor system to move cargo on and off aircraft. The Tunner can handle up to six cargo pallets and as much as 60,000 pounds.

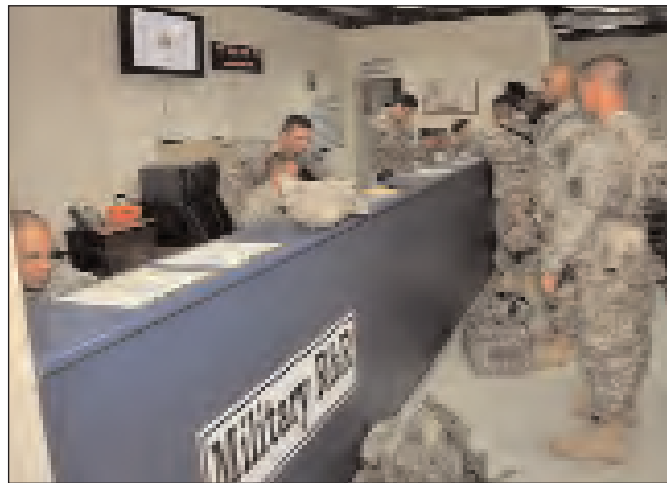
The Halvorsen 25K loader now in the Air Force inventory was designed mainly for C-130 aircraft in an expeditionary field environment.

"We continually seek ways to load and off-load aircraft better," said Chief Master Sgt. David Chittick, 10th Air Force Air Transportation Division, Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base Forth Worth, Texas. "Advanced mechanization is definitely the way to go."

The 463L pallet has been around since the 1960s. It was developed as a standard foundation for loading and securing cargo inside an aircraft. The pallet has a core made out of either fiberglass or balsa wood covered by an aluminum skin. The two-inch safety edge contains aluminum rails for locking the pallet in an aircraft and has



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**In addition to loading and off-loading aircraft, aerial porters run passenger terminals at locations around the world, making sure service members get where they are going on time.**

attached tie-down rings. The rings have a holding capacity of 7,500 pounds each. When all the restraining nets are used, the pallet's load capacity is 10,000 pounds.

The Air Transportation Technical School is at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, and is five weeks long. AFRC recruits with prior military service or Airmen retraining into the 2T2 AFSC have the option to attend either this school or the Transportation Proficiency Center's two-week basic course at Dobbins Air Reserve Base, Ga. In addition to the skills associated with loading and off-loading aircraft, trainees at the TPC receive instruction in self-aid/buddy care and force protection in some of the courses.

Prior to going to the TPC, trainees first enroll in their 3-level career development course. After being awarded their 3-level, new aerial porters are offered seasoning training at large aerial port centers to help reduce the amount of time it takes for them to obtain their 5-level.

From the end of the Vietnam war up through Operation Desert Storm in 1990, the Air Force Reserve had nearly 70 aerial port squadrons. But through force reductions, base realignment and closure actions, and total force initiatives, this number has steadily decreased to where today the Reserve has 38 aerial port units.

Port Dawgs were essential elements in the massive equipment and personnel movements to and from the Middle East during Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm. Today, in Southwest Asia, Reserve aerial porters are processing shipments with hazardous items, weighing vehicles and determining proper load configurations for multiple airlift airframes. The goal is to process passengers and tons of cargo onto short-field aircraft to help reduce the need for more risky convoys.

"Our port dawgs are doing a magnificent job supporting aerial port operations in Southwest Asia and around the globe," said Steve Vos of the Logistics Readiness Cell at Headquarters AFRC, Robins AFB, Ga. "Both through volunteerism and mobilization, our aerial port men and women have satisfactorily completed more than 5,900 deployment requirements since March 2002.

"They've consistently filled between 30 percent and 41 percent of the total Air Force 2T2 requirements in the Southwest



**Members of the 42nd Aerial Port Squadron, Westover Air Reserve Base, Mass., secure a 12-ton fire engine onboard a 439th Airlift Wing C-5B Galaxy. The C-5 airlifted the engine to Homestead Air Reserve Base, Fla. In addition, 15 aerial port Airmen from Westover deployed to Homestead to assist with the massive humanitarian airlift operation to Haiti.**

Asia region. For example, as of May 31, Air Force Reserve aerial porters took ownership of 439 of the 1,106 aerial port requirements. At two locations within the Middle East, our Reservists are managing the entire port operation."

During Operation Unified Response in January and February, when the United States, along with other nations and non-governmental agencies, provided around-the-clock assistance to the people of Haiti after a devastating earthquake, aerial porters answered the call. Initially, 12 volunteers from the 70th Aerial Port Squadron started air terminal operations at Homestead Air Reserve Base, Fla. However, this number quickly grew to more than 100 volunteers to meet the monumental humanitarian need.

Volunteers from AFRC's 27th, 42nd, 70th and 73rd squadrons came to the rescue with personnel and equipment. Members of the 27th from Minneapolis-St Paul International Airport Air Reserve Station, Minn., were performing their annual training at Charleston AFB, S.C., when they got diverted to Homestead to join the aerial port challenge.

"At one time, we had 40 tractor-trailers loaded with supplies waiting to go to Haiti," Chief Chittick said. "Once the airlift trail was established and landing sites were identified, our 2T2s pushed forward palletizing loads destined for the most needy. The 67th APS out of Hill AFB, Utah, sent forward 15 port dawgs

to Port Au Prince, Haiti, setting up an APS operation at the commercial airport. They deployed with their own tents and worked extremely well with the joint forces in charge on the ground."

In one month's time, AFRC port dawgs working out of Homestead ARB processed more than 1,200 passengers and 460 pallets, with outbound cargo weighing more than 2.8 million pounds. Additionally, 2T2s received and off-loaded more than 3,000 passengers.

"We identified many particulars and governmental intricacies involved in an international relief effort like this," Chief Chittick said. "There were passenger and immigration concerns, but we successfully worked them out. Likewise, because of limited landing sites available in-country, relief supplies were backed up for a while. However, once we got our equipment and manpower up to speed, the port dawgs ensured those supplies were properly crated, weighed and tied down to reach their final destinations."

Anywhere in the world, whenever airlift is needed, aerial porters are always some of the first people to arrive and some of the last to leave. Yesterday, today and tomorrow ... port dawgs are truly movers of the world. ★

(Mr. Vandevanter is assigned to the Expeditionary Combat Support Division of the Installations and Mission Support Directorate, Headquarters AFRC, Robins Air Force Base, Ga.)



# The Thrill of the Drill

**Reserve training instructors  
put high school Junior ROTC  
cadets through their paces**

**By Staff Sgt. Alexy Saltekoff**

**R**eservist military training instructors from the 433rd Training Squadron at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, trained their youngest group of troops yet at Mercer University in Macon, Ga.

Nearly 200 Junior ROTC students from 15 schools in Alabama, Georgia, Florida and South Carolina attended the Mercer Air Force ROTC Drill Leadership School July 11-16.

"We were responsible for the drill portion," said Tech. Sgt. Ricardo Chavez, a Reserve MTI. "With drill, we give them guidance on certain things that they may need help with. We work on things like command voice to build their confidence and their leadership abilities."

The unique opportunity gave the JROTC students the chance to learn first-hand the same drill techniques taught in Air Force basic training.

"We're that piece of the real Air Force that they need to see," said Master Sgt. Noah Hernandez. "It's an awesome opportunity for us to be ambassadors and show them what the Air Force is going to expect them to do. It gives them a really good inside view of what it would be like to go through basic training if they decide to join the Air Force."

Training the young students provided the MTIs new perspectives. While basic trainees are under an enlistment contract and the MTIs can shape them freely into Airmen, the JROTC students are still in high school and under the care of their school teachers.

"In basic training, they know to follow orders without hesitation," said Staff Sgt. Kyle Rogier. "At Lackland, we wake the trainees up at 4:45 a.m. and we're with them until 7 p.m., correcting every little thing. The MTI is the mentor, the teacher, everything. Instructors deal with phone calls home and family emergencies. Here, we're just the drill instructor."

"I think the biggest difference here is the expectation," said Sergeant Hernandez. "In basic training, we expect trainees to do what we tell them and expect them to do it right. Here we tell the students what to do and hopefully they do it right."

A few JROTC students were selected to lead and march a flight, which is not expected of basic trainees. The goal was to train some students to return to their schools and be able to instruct others.

"They're expected to do 16 drill movements from memory," said Senior Master Sgt. Julie Begley, 433rd TS superintendent. "They march 13 other cadets. The leader has memorized 16 different drill movements and was evaluated on following the order that those movements were in, properly executing them. That's the MTI's job at Lackland."

After drill camp, the MTIs returned to Lackland where their primary mission is to augment regular Air Force instructors. When active-duty instructor manning is low, the Reserve squadron steps up to fill the void. Some members of the 433rd TS have been full-time instructors since 2006. The instructors also have traveled to help with ROTC training, cadet training at the Air Force Academy and change of command ceremonies at various wings. ★



Tech. Sgt. Allison Chavez addresses a flight of Junior ROTC cadets and gives tips on how to improve their marching. Air Force Reserve instructors from the 433rd Training Squadron at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, trained nearly 200 cadets in the finer points of drill, command voice and marching a flight.

STAFF SGT. ALEXY SATEKOFF



Tech. Sgt. Ricardo Chavez gives pointers and corrections on how to march a flight to Junior ROTC cadets.

STAFF SGT. ALEXY SATEKOFF



Sergeant Chavez works with a cadet.



Staff Sgt. Kyle Rogier ensures a flight of cadets stays in formation.

STAFF SGT. ALEXY SATEKOFF





**AIR FORCE RESERVE**

**WINGMAN  
PROJECT**

**Citizen Airmen...**  
**Never leave their Wingman.**



**Ask**

Ask directly:  
"Are you thinking of killing yourself?"

**Care**

Intervene. Control the situation.  
Use active listening. Remove the means to do self-injury.

**Escort**

Get them to a primary care provider,  
chaplain or other healthcare professional.



**[www.afrc.wingmantoolkit.org](http://www.afrc.wingmantoolkit.org)**

Need Help Now? 800-273-8255 (TALK) National Suicide Prevention Lifeline